

Categorical Exclusion Documentation Format for Actions Other Than Hazardous Fuels and Fire Rehabilitation Actions

Twin Mills Nuisance Wild Burro Removal

DOI-BLM-AZ-C010-2015-0036-CX

A. Background

Kingman Field Office received many complaints from a private land owner pertaining to approximately 75 wild burros that are creating a nuisance on private land tearing up water systems and tearing down fencing. These burros also utilize public land.

BLM Office: Kingman Field Office

Proposed Action Title/Type: Twin Mills, Nuisance Burro Removal

Location of Proposed Action: Golden Valley, Arizona

Description of proposed action: The BLM proposes to remove 75 nuisance burros in the Twin Mills Pasture on private land inside the Black Mountain Herd Management Area (HMA), Mohave County, Arizona. See Figure 1 on Page 3.

The removal would be conducted in the fall of 2015. Bait trap sites would be located on private land in areas where burros have created nuisance situations. Traps would be located in disturbed areas. Burros would be enticed into a corral constructed with a one way gate; the animals would enter, and not be able to exit the corral. Since wild burros generally have not acquired a taste for alfalfa hay, it may take time to get them accustomed to hay and panels before initiating a bait trapping operation. Once burros begin to utilize the hay offered, a temporary corral is constructed around the bait site. The bait traps will be temporary and the area would be reclaimed by removing the corral panels, and raking up hay and manure. Trapping operations will begin as soon as possible in August. Individuals and agencies who expressed interest in the management of burros will be notified in writing about this proposal.

The following would also apply:

1. The holder shall immediately bring to the attention of the Kingman Field Manager (or designated representative) any cultural resources (prehistoric/historic sites or objects) and/or paleontological resources (fossils) encountered during permitted operations and maintain the integrity of such resources pending subsequent investigation. All permitted operations within 30 meters (100 feet) of the cultural resources shall cease until written authorization to proceed is received from the Authorized Officer. Actions which result in impacts to archaeological or historical resources shall be subject to the provisions of the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 as amended (ARPA) and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. These statutes protect cultural resources for the benefit of all Americans. No person may excavate, remove, damage, or otherwise alter or deface any historic or prehistoric site, artifact or object of antiquity located on public lands without authorization. Damaging cultural resources more than 100 years of age is a punishable act under ARPA. Criminal and/or civil penalties may result if damage to archaeological resources is documented, as provided under ARPA and its implementing regulations at 43 CFR 7.

2. Contractors shall receive a copy of the tortoise handling guidelines (attached) and distribute to all workers the day of the project and advise on handling procedures.
3. In the event hazardous materials are encountered during any activities associated with this, all activity would cease with the hazardous material and a BLM Law Enforcement Ranger would be contacted immediately.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: *Kingman Resource Management Plan/EIS*

Date Approved/Amended: March 1995

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the decision(s) via the following Sections and text:

- Manage for a viable population of wild and free-roaming horses and burros to achieve, maintain a thriving, natural ecological balance in herd management areas and maintain and enhance the habitat in a desirable condition for continued multiple use (Page 55).
- Wild horse and burro management on public lands requires maintenance of a herd inventory, habitat monitoring and the removal and placement of excess animals to the public for adoption (Page 86).
- All wild burros that are removed are made available for adoption through the Wild Horse and Burro Adoption Program
- Removal of nuisance burros from private land is required when request in writing from the landowner.

C. Compliance with NEPA:

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, D. Rangeland Management, (4) Removal of wild horses or burros from private lands at the request of the landowner.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed with respect to the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 (Attachment 1).

I considered the plan conformance and NEPA compliance record and have determined that the proposed project is in conformance with the approved land use plan, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 are of concern and no further environmental analysis is required.

D: Signature

Authorizing Official: /s/ Ruth Zimmerman Date: 8/27/2015
Ruth Zimmerman
Acting Field Manager, Kingman Field Office

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact Chad Benson, Wild Horse and Burro Specialist, Kingman Field Office, 2755 Mission Blvd, Kingman, AZ 86401, and 928-718-3750.

Note: A separate decision document must be prepared for the action covered by the CX.

Attachment 1 – Screening for Extraordinary Circumstances

Each of the following questions must be answered with “No,” by all resource specialists participating on the interdisciplinary team before this CX may be approved (516DM).

Resource Concerns		Yes	No
1. Will this project have significant adverse effects on public health or safety?			X
2. Will this project adversely affect such unique geographic characteristics as: (a) historic or cultural resources; (b) park, recreation or refuge lands, wilderness areas, wild or scenic rivers; (c) sole or principal drinking water aquifers; (d) prime farmlands, wetlands, flood plains, or (e) ecologically significant or critical areas, including those listed on the Department of the Interior’s National Register of Natural Landmarks?			(a) X (b) X (c) X (d) X (e) X
3. Will this project have highly controversial environmental effects?			X
4. Will this project have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?			X
5. Will this project establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects?			X
6. Will this project be related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects?			X
7. Will this project have adverse effects on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places?			X
8. Will this project have adverse effects on species listed or proposed for listing on the Threatened or Endangered Species List, or have adverse effects on designated Critical Habitat for these species?			X
9. Will this project require compliance with Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management), Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), or the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act?			X
10. Will this project threaten to violate a Federal, State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?			X
11. Will this project limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites? (Executive Order 13007— Sacred Sites)			X
12. Will this project contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species?			X
Reviewers and Comments			
Resource	Specialist Name	Comment	Surname
Air/Hydrology/Soils			
Archaeology/Cultural	Peter Bungart	Trap sites will be placed on private property in areas approved by the land owner. A cultural clearance report was completed on August 15, 2015 which documents that no cultural sites or Artifacts were found within the bait trap areas.	/s/ P Bungart 8/15/15
Biologist Fisheries and/or Wildlife	Rebecca Peck 8/10/2015	No affect is expected to occur for T&E species or critical habitat as no known species or critical habitat is known in the project area. Tortoise handling procedures would be followed (Appendix A)	/s/ R Peck 8/10/15
Public Safety/Env. Justice	Victoria Anne	No. Public safety is expected to improve when burros are removed.	/s/ V Anne 8/10/15
Grazing/RangeMgmt			
Lands/Realty			
Minerals/Oil/Gas			
Recreation/Visual			
Water/Sub & surface			
Weeds/Invasive/non-Native			
Wild Horse and Burro	Chad Benson	Individuals and agencies would be notified prior to any initial bait trapping of the burros.	/s/ C Benson 8/10/15

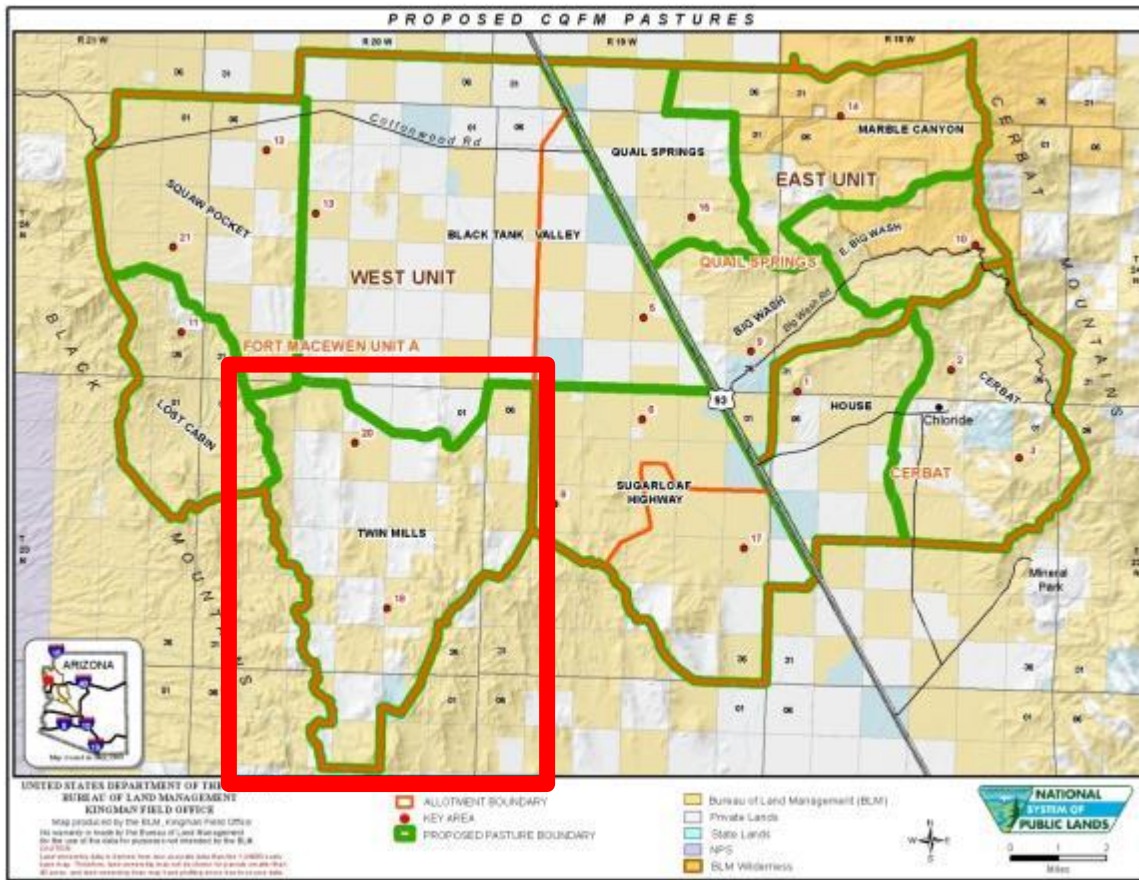


Figure 1

Burro removal will only be private land sections (colored white sections within red boxed area) of map above.

Compliance and assignment of responsibility: Chad Benson

Monitoring and assignment of responsibility: Chad Benson

Review: *We have determined that the proposal is in accordance with the categorical exclusion criteria and that it would not involve any significant environmental effects. Therefore, it is categorically excluded from further environmental review.*

Prepared by:	/s/ C. Benson _____ Chad Benson, Project Lead Kingman/Lake Havasu, Wild Horse and Burro Specialist	Date: <u>8/27/2015</u>
Reviewed by:	/s/ V. Anne _____ Victoria Anne, NEPA Environmental Coordinator Colorado River District	Date: <u>8/27/2015</u>
Reviewed by:	/s/ R. Zimmerman _____ Ruth Zimmerman, Acting Field Manager Kingman Field Office	Date: <u>8/27/2015</u>

Appendix A

United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Kingman Field Office
2755 Mission Boulevard
Kingman, Arizona 86401
www.az.blm.gov



GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING DESERT TORTOISE ENCOUNTERED ON ROADS AND VEHICLE WAYS

1. Stop your vehicle and allow the tortoise to move off the road.
2. If the tortoise is not moving, gently** pick up the tortoise and move it approximately 200 feet off the road to a shaded location.
 - a. Do **not** turn the tortoise over.
 - b. Move the tortoise in the direction it was traveling. If it was crossing the road, move it in the direction it was crossing.
 - c. Keep the tortoise within 12-18 inches of the ground, move slowly so as not to cause it to become alarmed.
 - d. Release the tortoise under the shade of a bush or rock.

** Tortoise store water in their bladder. If a tortoise becomes alarmed its defense is to void its bladder onto the captor. This could lead to dehydration of the tortoise and potentially to death.

